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North Carolina Life Tables 1979-1981

Normally the SCHS measures the force of mortality through the use of such measures as crude and adjusted death rates. Such measures are appropriate for epidemiologic work; however, to a nonstatistician, mortality expressed as the number of deaths per 1,000 or 100,000 population seems removed and impersonal. What do these rates mean to our citizens? What do they mean to me? Life tables based on these mortality rates provide us with a much more personal glimpse of the effects of our state's mortality. For example: Based on current mortality patterns and my age, race, and sex, what is my life expectancy? Similarly, what is that of my children?

In 1975 the SCHS published an abridged set of life tables for the state. The present report provides a complete set of life tables (each year of age) based on 1979-81 mortality data and the 1980 census.

This report was prepared by Dr. J. Gregory Williams while he was employed with the Office of State Budget and Management, Research and Planning Services. We are very grateful to Ms. Karen Bunn, Chief of Research and Planning Services, for allowing us to reprint this document as an SCHS STUDIES report.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Life Table Value Description	3
North Carolina Life Tables: 1979-81	5
Life Table, Total Population	6
Life Table, Male Population	8
Life Table, Female Population	10
Life Table, White Population	12
Life Table, White Male Population	14
Life Table, White Female Population	16
Life Table, Nonwhite Population	18
Life Table, Nonwhite Male Population	20
Life Table, Nonwhite Female Population	22